
Online Course Business Plan Development

General Project Planning

Market and Audience Profile

Describe the market for your product.

- Who is your primary audience? Who are other audiences both within your University and external to it? How large are those audiences?
- How many learners per year do you expect will take your course? If a cohort course, how many offerings and how many learners per offering?
- Where are the target learners for your course located? What is their level of access to Web-based learning?
- In what other ways – and through what other course offerings – are your main audiences currently learning the content that is planned for your online or hybrid courses? Describe the comparable course offerings, including their formats, costs, and types of access to learners.
- What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of competitive courses?
- For what reasons and benefits are learners interested in courses of this type (for example, certification, credentialing, etc.)
- What might make your proposed online or hybrid course unique within the market?

Deliverables and Technologies

Provide more specific details about the nature of your planned project.

- What is the general description of the course?
- Which academic technologies will be used to design, develop, and deliver your online or hybrid course (including course management system, primary programming language such as html or Flash, Web-conferencing software, videography, audio, etc.)?
- What other information will help describe how you will deliver the course to students (including the Digital Campus, classroom sessions, etc.)?

Staffing and Instructional Support

- Once the project has been developed, what staffing will be required?

Stakeholders and Partners

- Which individuals, departments, other University units, or outside organizations will be involved in the design, delivery, approval, and implementation of this project? In what capacities?
- How will the project benefit each of the stakeholders or partners?

Intellectual Property

- Is any content that will be used in this course owned or copyrighted by other authors or publishers?
- Who on the project will have rights to intellectual property for the course content?
- Should the final project be licensed to other institutions in the future, which individuals, academic units, and offices would have rights to a potential distribution of income?

Funding and Operational Support Sources

- What internal sources of funding and operational support are available to this project?
- What is your pricing strategy?
- What external grants, foundations, government agencies, or other sources of funding are available?
- Specifically, once the project is developed, what funding will be used to sustain the project and repay money that has been invested? Within what timeframe?

Marketing and Publicity

- What communications and channels will be used to 'advertise' or publicize the online or hybrid course to the target audiences?
- Who will develop those communications?
- What resources will support ongoing marketing and publicity?